



P.O. Box 1000, Beverly Hills, Ca. 90213

Star Wars Sweeps The Oscars

The 50th annual presentation of the Academy Awards was held on the 3rd of April, at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles. Millions of people, all over the world, watched as Star Wars was announced the winner of 7 Oscars.

Star Wars received Academy Awards in the following categories (the names in parenthesis are that of the individual recipients):

Special Achievement Award for the Creation of Alien, Creature, and Robot Voices—Benjamin Burtt, Jr.

Best Achievement in Sound—Don McDougall, Ray West, Bob Minkler, and Derek Ball

Best Achievement in Visual Effects—John Stears, John Dykstra, Richard Edlund, Grant McCune, and Robert Blalack

Best Achievement in Art Direction—John Barry, Norman Reynolds, and Leslie Dilley and **Set Decoration**—Roger Christian

Best Achievement in Costume Design—John Mollo

Best Original Score—John Williams

Best Achievement in Editing—Paul Hirsch, Marcia Lucas, and Richard Chew

Star Wars was also nominated for Academy Awards in 4 other categories. Best Supporting Actor (Sir Alec Guinness), Best Original Screenplay (George Lucas), Best Director (George Lucas), and Best Picture.

Local Chapters for the Official Star Wars Fan Club

We've received dozens of letters from people who'd like to start their own Star Wars Fan Club. They want to get together with people who share their interests. And we've decided to help them.

We'll be running listings of all of the Local Chapters, to let you know if there's one in your area. We'll also run write-ups on Local Chapter activities.

We've set up some guidelines for the formation and running of Local Chapters. If you're interested in forming one, write to Local Chapters; c/o Star Wars Fan Club; P.O. Box 1000; Beverly Hills CA 90213.

Name the Newsletter Contest

One plan we held for the Official Star Wars Fan Club from the start was to have contests where the members could win prizes. This is the first of our contests, and the prizes are pretty good. Future, bigger contests will have prizes like a chance to meet and talk with one of the stars of *Star Wars*, or, perhaps, a visit to the set. But we don't think anyone will be disappointed with the prizes for this contest. You'll find out what they are later in this article.

The purpose of this contest is to name the newsletter. Calling it "the Official Star Wars Fan Club newsletter" or "the newsletter of the Official Star Wars Fan Club" is awkward and overly long. We want a nice, short, distinctive name for this newsletter; one that people will remember. And we're having a contest to let the members of the Official Star Wars Fan Club suggest the name.

Any member of the Official Star Wars Fan Club can enter. Just send in up to three suggestions for a title, along with your name, address, and Force number, to Name the Newsletter; c/o Star Wars Fan Club; P.O. Box 1000; Beverly Hills CA 90213. Representatives of *Star Wars* Corporation will select the top three title suggestions. The First Place suggestion will become the title of the newsletter.

In addition to having his or her title suggestion used, the First Place winner will receive a set of three ceramic *Star Wars* drinking mugs, manufactured by Mind Circus (1657 18th St; Santa Monica CA 90404), and an R2-D2 cookie jar, manufactured by Roman Ceramics (4849 Golf Rd; Skokie IL 60076). The Second Place winner will receive a set of three

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ceramic Star Wars Mugs. The Third Place winner will receive an R2-D2 cookie jar.



In the case of duplicate suggestions, the earliest postmark will determine the winner. The decision of the judges is final. Employees of Factors Etc, Inc., *Star Wars* Corporation, and Twentieth Century-Fox, and their families are not eligible.

Entries must be received by 20 July 1978. The winners will be announced in the fourth issue of the Official *Star Wars* Fan Club. Void where prohibited by law.

Between the script and the projector

Between the time a film script is completed and when it is first shown in theaters, a lot happens. Even on simple pictures. *Star Wars* is anything but simple, and it took a good deal to transform it from George Lucas's basic concept to the final form you see on the motion picture screen.

The first step after completing the basic script concept was to visualize the new world. George Lucas contacted Colin Cantwell, who had worked on *2001: A Space Odyssey*, to design the initial space-craft models. Alex Tavoularis started preliminary storyboard sketches of the early scripts. Production Illustrator Ralph McQuarrie began to visualize the basic ideas for characters, costumes, props, and scenery. Over a period of time, McQuarrie went from simple sketches and line drawings to a handsome series of production paintings which set a visual tone for the picture.

While this was being done, Producer Gary Kurtz worked out a budget and logistical plan for the complex job of filming on three continents. For the desert planet of Tatooine, all American, North African, and Middle Eastern deserts were researched and explored. In southern Tunisia, on the edge of the Sahara Desert, the ideal location was found—a dry, arid landscape with limitless horizons filled with bizarre but real architecture.

It was decided that the interiors would be photographed in London, England, because of the close proximity to North Africa and also because of the availability of a pool of top technical people at the EMI Elstree Studios. It was the only studio in England or America that could provide nine large

stages simultaneously, and allow the company complete freedom to handpick its own personnel.

The script called for a large number of miniature and optical effects. In June of 1975, George Lucas and Gary Kurtz signed John Dykstra to supervise the photographic special effects. No commercial facility had the equipment or the time to accomplish what *Star Wars* required, so Dykstra worked out the plans for a complete 'in-house' effects shop. Appropriately named Industrial Light & Magic Corporation, the shop was set up in a warehouse in the San Fernando Valley.

Employing as many as seventy-five people and, in post-production, working in two full shifts, ILM executed the three hundred-sixty separate special effects shots in the film. Altogether, film enhancement and special effects are visible for half of the running time of *Star Wars*.

The various departments at ILM included a carpentry shop and a machine shop, which had to build or modify the special camera, editing, animation, and projection equipment required for the special effects. A model shop was built to construct the prototype models of the various space and land vehicles.

Other departments included Optical Printing, for putting layers of film together, a Rotoscope Department, which provided matte work and also generated the original images to be used in explosion enhancement. The Electronics Shop devised special cameras for a self-contained camera-and-motion control system. There was also a Film Control Department to oversee the filing and coordinating of all of the separate film elements.

Meanwhile, at Elstree Studios, Production Designer John Barry and his crew began designing the large number of props and sets needed. Instead of the shiny, new-looking architecture and rockets normally associated with space fantasy films, the props and sets for *Star Wars* were designed to look used and inhabited. John Barry commented "George wants to make it look like it's shot on location."

George Lucas began a three-month period of casting the unusual roles in November of 1975. Using the same approach he used for *American Graffiti*, he chose new, fresh talent for three of the five major roles.

When asked what drew him to the actors he selected for *Star Wars*, Lucas said, "They're good actors and they're more or less by nature like the characters in the story. The important thing about a movie like *Star Wars* is that it be believable to an audience, and that they believe in the characters. And these actors, because of who they are, bring believability to the situations."

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Q & A

In each issue of the newsletter, we'll try to answer some of the most-often-asked questions about *Star Wars*. If you have any questions that you'd like to have answered, send them to Q & A; c/o Star Wars Fan Club; P.O. Box 1000; Beverly Hills CA 90213. We don't have room to answer all of the questions we receive, but we'll answer as many as we can in these pages.

Where can I write to members of the cast or crew of *Star Wars*?

For various reasons, we can't give out the addresses of the cast and crew members. However, if you want to write to them, you can address your letter to that person, in care of Star Wars Corp.; P.O. Box 8669; Universal City CA 91608. We can't promise an answer, but we can promise that the person you write to will receive your letter.

One thing to remember: if you want to write to more than one person, you have to send each person a separate letter. If two letters arrive, one addressed to Mark Hamill and the other addressed to Carrie Fisher, we can send each person his letter. But if one letter arrives addressed to "Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher", more than likely neither one of them will see it. So, if you want your letter to arrive, address it to just one person.

At the end of *Star Wars*, Luke Skywalker and Han Solo each received a medal from Princess Leia. Why didn't Chewbacca receive one?

The Rebel forces wanted to give Chewbacca a medal for his part in saving Princess Leia and in the destruction of the Death Star, but Wookiees don't approve of medals. So, respecting Chewbacca's wishes, they didn't give him one.



They didn't want Chewie to go totally unrewarded, however. So, after the ceremony at the Rebel base, they flew to the Wookiee planet for a celebration.

What happened to Obi-wan Kenobi? What happened to Luke Skywalker's father? What happened to Darth Vader?

The story of what happened to each of these three people will be told in the sequel to *Star Wars*. (For more information on the sequel, look for the *Star Wars II* article in this issue.)

How did Luke's Landspeeder work?

Landspeeders are anti-gravitational vehicles that work on lines of gravity that are at right angles (ninety degrees) to the planet's own gravity. The only effect of speed, other than it visually moving, should be the wind on the occupants' hair and clothing. This means that there should be no exhaust visible, nor should there be dust blown up from underneath the vehicle.

This being the case, it immediately ruled out the use of any sort of hovercraft, because of the billows of dust its fans would create in desert situations.

Luke's speeder had to be small, quick, and maneuverable. Two versions of it were made, one of which could actually be driven through towns and across the salt flats. This powered speeder was based on a three wheel configuration—one in front and two at the rear. From most angles, the front wheel seemed to have disappeared. The rear wheels were mounted close to the center of the vehicle, instead of at the edge, as with most cars, so very little of them were seen.



What little could be seen was removed from the picture using equipment known as an Optical Printer, along with the knowledge and abilities of many special effects experts. The details of how this process is done are too complex to really get into here.

The other version of the speeder was suspended from a rotating rig (similar to an amusement park 'airplane ride', but with only one arm) which could move through a complete circle. This rig could be set for various widths of the circle, to a maximum width of two hundred feet.

This device was used for several shots in Tunisia and in the studio. One example of a shot where this

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was used is the scene where, after discovering the destroyed Sandcrawler, Luke jumps into his speeder and rushes home.

The rig had to be capable of supporting an occupied speeder and a camera and operator. It was possible to set-up or take down the rig in approximately one hour. In total, the rig weighed in at around five tons, and was painted to be as unobtrusive as possible against its background. Special Production and Mechanical Effects Supervisor John Stears was the one who had to design and construct the landspeeder.

That's all the questions and answers for this issue. Next issue, more questions and more answers. The information provided in this column is not based on rumors or presumptions, but is garnered from the people actually involved in the making of *Star Wars*.

Star Wars Sequel

On February 23rd, it was announced that Star Wars Corporation will begin production on the sequel to *Star Wars* this summer. The title has not been selected yet, but it will not be *Star Wars II*.

George Lucas's company, Lucasfilm Limited, will finance the production, currently budgeted for 10 million dollars, with Twentieth Century-Fox acting as distributors.

Based on the second of twelve stories in George Lucas's *Adventures of Luke Skywalker* series, the first draft of the screenplay was written by Leigh Brackett. Ms Brackett had extensive credits in both motion pictures and science fiction, having written the scripts for such films as *The Big Sleep* (with

Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall), *Rio Bravo*, *Hatari!*, and *The Long Goodbye*, and such science fiction books as *Sword of Rhiannon*, *The Ginger Star*, *Starmen of Llyrdis*, and *The Long Tomorrow*.

The new film will be directed by Irvin Kershner, who has just completed the Jon Peters Production Eyes. Mr. Kershner's directorial credits also include *The Flim Flam Man*, *A Fine Madness*, *Loving*, *The Return of a Man Called Horse*, the highly acclaimed TV film *Raid on Entebbe*, and episodes of the TV programs *The Rebel* and *Naked City*.

Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, and Carrie Fisher have been signed to continue their roles as Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, and Princess Leia Organa.

Star Wars Merchandise and Discounts

As you all are probably aware, there is a lot of *Star Wars*-related merchandise on the market—tee-shirts, posters, blankets, masks, towels, toys, and more. And we've received quite a few letters from people wanting to know what is being produced and where it's available.

Some future issues of the newsletter will have inserts from companies producing *Star Wars* merchandise. Not only will these inserts serve to let you know what items are available and where they can be ordered, but some of the companies will provide discounts to members of the Official *Star Wars* Fan Club.

So look to future issues of this newsletter for information and discounts on *Star Wars* products.

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STAR WARS FAN CLUB
P.O. Box 1000, Beverly Hills, Ca. 90213

OFFICIAL STAR WARSTM BUTTONS

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